

Yancy G.

My name is Yancy G. and this is my story.

Before my accident, I had 3 businesses going and lived in Houghton Lake, MI. In the summertime, I ran my glass company. In the Fall, I cut firewood that I sold year round. And in the winter, I did my snow plowing with my plow truck. My hobbies included glasswork making stained glass pieces and mirror clocks.

I got in my accident on the night of December 23, 1987. It was a snowy and icy drive home after closing my shop. I was driving a Chevy Chevette when four-wheel drive Dodge SUV driving Southbound hit the side of my car. I was flown by helicopter to the University of Michigan. I was told they couldn't keep me breathing and was revived three times by the Survival Flight team. I don't remember anything about my accident and was in a coma for three months while at U of M Hospital.

It makes me feel bad to think about my accident because I ended up with a speech problem, I couldn't walk and my body was all cut up with lots of scars. I was in therapy at the U of M Hospital for 4 months after coming out of my coma and was later moved to Mary Free Bed in Grand Rapids. I learned how to walk and talk again during this time, but I still have a difficult time talking and moving around. People have a hard time understanding me and I need a walker and wheelchair to get around.

I moved to a nursing home in Grand Rapids and lived there from 1988 to 1993. Finally, I moved back home to my dad's in Houghton Lake in 1993. I had a hard time living at my dad's because I couldn't be left alone. I wanted to live on my own again and my guardian helped me find a program like Eisenhower Center where I learned how to be more independent. I learned how to talk better, my vocabulary consisted of three words yes, no and maybe. I learned how to walk with a walker and not be stuck in my wheelchair permanently. My brain got better because I learned how to do more things like think for myself, remember my schedule, cook, clean, remember phone numbers and lots of other things.

Today I live in my own apartment with staff in the next building. I work 5 days a week at Sprint Mobile, Genesis Center and Ann Arbor Learning Center for about 12 to 13 hours a week. I sign-out to church every Sunday, the library, grocery stores, shopping malls, restaurants, coffee shops and bookstores around town. Every winter, my Program Coordinator helps plan a vacation for me to a warm climate like Florida, Mexico or the Caribbean because I have difficulty with Michigan's harsh winters.

I have been very lucky to have State Auto Insurance. They give me a place to live on my own like Eisenhower Center, a power wheelchair to get around, and pay for someone to come with me on vacation because I need help with people understanding me and getting around new places. If it wasn't for my auto no fault benefits, I would be stuck not going anywhere or doing anything like before I came to Eisenhower Center.